

ITEM 10 - Information

July 16, 2003

Report on the Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign

Staff

Recommendation: Receive briefing on proposed activities for the second year of the public education campaign entitled "Street Smart", which is directed at motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists throughout the Washington Region.

Issues: None.

Background: At its January 15, 2003 meeting, the TPB was briefed on the first year of "Street Smart", a regional public education and outreach campaign to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist deaths and injuries. On October 1st, 2002, a news conference was held at COG to announce the launch of the campaign, which was completed in December and consisted of four weeks of radio, busbacks, billboards, metro station posters, transit shelter signs, radio interviews, and inserts in drivers license renewal packets.

For the second year of the campaign, the TPB will apply for federal safety funds through the Maryland Office of Highway Safety, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, and the District Department of Transportation. Local matching funds need to be identified.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the

TPB Technical Subcommittee provides technical oversight of this regional campaign.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Planning Board

FROM: Michael Farrell, Transportation Planner
Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Street Smart Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign:
Status and Prospects for FY 2004

DATE: July 10, 2003

In 2002 the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) initiated a regional pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign known as Street Smart. Street Smart is an educational campaign, directed at motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, with the goal of reducing pedestrian injuries and deaths. The Washington region has an average of 2,610 pedestrian injuries and 85 fatalities per year. The TPB was briefed on the development of the campaign at its June 19 and October 16, 2002 meetings, and received a report on the results of the first year of the campaign at its January 15, 2003 meeting.

Background

The regional campaign grew out of smaller jurisdictional pedestrian safety campaigns and a regional wave of interest in pedestrian safety. In late 2001, several jurisdictions in the Washington region were developing pedestrian safety programs, and were interested in advertising to promote pedestrian safety. They realized, however, that in an expensive media market like the Washington region, separate media campaigns were far too costly. Montgomery County had secured \$95,000 in funds for a pedestrian safety campaign, enough to develop the materials, but not enough to buy advertising time. Meanwhile other jurisdictions, notably the District of Columbia, Arlington County, and Fairfax County, found themselves in a similar situation, whereby the amount of money they were contemplating spending on pedestrian safety education would not be sufficient to pay for mass media.

In this context, members of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and TPB staff reached an understanding with Montgomery County that the County would use its funds to develop the messages and materials for a regional media campaign. To ensure that the campaign content would reflect a regional consensus, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee would oversee the development of the campaign materials. At the urging of the District of Columbia, bicycle safety was added to the campaign. In return, representatives of the other jurisdictions and TPB staff agreed to try to obtain funds to buy advertising time for the regional campaign. The TPB was briefed on the efforts of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee at its June meeting.

Street Smart Year One

A news conference was held in the COG Board Room on October 1st, 2002 to announce the campaign. The campaign was completed in December and consisted of four weeks of drive-time radio, bus-backs, billboards, Metro station posters, transit shelter posters, brochures, radio interviews, and inserts in driver's license renewal packets. Eleven radio stations ran 941 radio spots. Sixty-five bus-backs, 12 metro station posters, 350 bus cards, and 43 transit shelter posters were placed, and many were still in place several weeks after their paid period expired. The Maryland Department of Motor vehicles put safety tips inserts into 250,000 driver's license renewal packets, and 2,250 full-size posters were printed and distributed to TPB member jurisdictions and others requesting them. 50,000 brochures were printed in English and Spanish. In addition, the campaign received substantial coverage on Spanish-language television, and officials gave four interviews on radio talk shows.

The budget for the Fall 2002 campaign was \$319,800. The Maryland Office of Highway Safety, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, and the District of Columbia Department of Transportation provided \$264,800 in federal safety funds. In addition to the \$95,000 provided by Montgomery County, Fairfax County provided \$50,000 in local funds, and the City of Alexandria provided \$5,000. TPB staff administered the funding, and a consultant, Design House, designed and placed the advertisements. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee oversaw the effort.

The Fall 2002 effort was successful, leading to a ten percentage point increase in awareness of the major campaign themes, according to a before and after survey. However, experience with drunk driving campaigns shows that changing ingrained behaviors requires a number of years, so we did not expect or get noticeable behavior changes in the first year. A copy of the final report for the 2002 campaign is posted at mwcog.org, under "documents" in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee Section.

Outlook for Street Smart Year Two

The TPB will now apply for funds to fund Street Smart for another year. Next year's campaign will run in the spring.

An important goal for the Spring 2004 effort is outreach to new-immigrant Hispanic populations. Radio, transit property, and bus-back ads in Spanish have been effective, but we are looking for more ways to reach this population, which is disproportionately involved in pedestrian crashes.

We also need to create a multi-year plan for changing specific driving, walking and bicycling behaviors, including tactics and funding requirements.

Funding

We are applying for \$100,000 each from the Maryland Office of Highway Safety, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, and the District Department of Transportation. All those funds are federal dollars that require a minimum 20% local match, so \$75,000 in local funding will be needed as well. Formal commitments for funding have yet to be obtained.